

Small Group Guide Sheet

New Testament: Journey to Rome

Here are some possible discussion avenues for your family group discussion.

1. **Check in** with your family to see how the day has gone. Have everyone share their highs and lows.
2. **Paul's Letter to the Philippians** – Paul writes his letter to the Philippians while he is a prisoner. The letter never mentions *where* he is imprisoned. But while he's in jail, a delegation from Philippi come to visit him. They come to encourage him and bring him a gift of necessities. Paul is greatly encouraged by their visit, and so he sits down to write a letter to the church community in Philippi. The people who visited him in jail will carry the letter back with them.

Paul describes to the Philippians how his imprisonment has actually helped to spread the news about Jesus. Read Philippians 1:12-14 (p. 953).

- Verse 13 – What silver lining does Paul see in his imprisonment? (*It's widely known that Paul is imprisoned because he's a minister for Christianity. The entire Imperial Guard are hearing about who Jesus is.*)

We can sense the great peril Paul is in while imprisoned. He doesn't know if he'll be executed or set free. Read Philippians 1:18b-26.

- Verse 19 – Does Paul seem reasonably hopeful that his imprisonment will have a good ending? (*it will turn out "for my deliverance"*)
- Verse 20 – Paul says that Christ can be exalted in his body in two ways. What are they? (*Through his life or through his death*)
- Verse 21 – Between living and dying, what does Paul think is the better end? (*Dying: "to die is gain."*)
- Verse 22 – What does he see is the advantage to staying alive? (*Paul can continue to be productive in his ministry*)
- Verses 25-26 – Since Paul believes remaining in the flesh will be to the advantage of the Philippians, what does Paul deduce about his eventual outcome? (*He won't be executed but will be released and visit the Philippians*)

The Philippians have always been generous and giving to Paul. They helped him when he was ministering in Macedonia, and now they are sending him a gift while in prison. Look at Philippians 4:10-14.

- Verse 10 – Paul thanks the Philippians for their gift. Besides the gift, what else is he appreciative for? (*Their concern for him. They acted as soon as they could*). You can endure a lot of hardship if you know people are thinking of you! Discuss times when you've experienced this.
- Verses 11-12 – What do these verses tell you about what Paul has experienced during his ministry? (*He has lived abundantly and also endured times of extreme deprivation.*)
- Verse 13 – Verse 13 is a very well known and inspiring Bible verse. Have everyone read it together. Ask: what does it mean to you?